



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

Template Version 2.09

Voluntary Report - public distribution

**Date:** 1/6/2004

**GAIN Report Number:** E24002

## European Union

### Trade Policy Monitoring

## Mad Cow Disease - The EU and The US 2004

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**Report Highlights:**

Mad Cow Disease appears to have begun in the United Kingdom in the late 1980's, and subsequently spread through most of the EU. Great efforts have been made by the EU to decrease the number of BSE-infected cattle in recent years. Most recently a single dairy cow in the United States was diagnosed with Mad Cow Disease. Data within this report facilitate putting this finding into a worldwide context.

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Includes PSD Changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
Brussels USEU [BE2]  
[E2]

Mad Cow Disease or BSE appears to have begun in the United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland, with the first cases being confirmed in the late 1980's. The disease then appears to have spread throughout most of the European Union (EU). The number of cases in the UK has declined greatly since reaching a peak of more than 37,000 BSE-positive cattle found in 1992. The disease, although never reaching the same levels as in the UK, has been slower to crest in the rest of the EU with the disease appearing to have peaked in other EU member states (MS) between 1998 and 2002.<sup>1</sup> More recent data (Table 1) do suggest a great decline in the number of new cases, the result of strong efforts made by the EU, initially destroying entire herds that contained one or more of the diseased cattle.

**Table 1. Confirmed Cases of Mad Cow Disease in The European Union<sup>a</sup>**

	2001	2002	2003	Total	Estimated Production <sup>b</sup> (x 1000MT)
<b>EU</b>					<b>7360</b>
Austria	0	0	0	1	
Belgium	46	38	18	121	
Denmark	6	3	2	13	
Finland	1	0	0	1	
France	274	239	95	843 <sup>c</sup>	
Germany	125	106	51	264	
Greece	1	0	0	1	
Ireland	246	333	155	1330 <sup>c</sup>	
Italy	50	36	17	105 <sup>c</sup>	
Luxembourg	0	1	0	1	
Netherlands	20	24	18	70	
Portugal	110	86	120	798 <sup>c</sup>	
Spain	82	127	158	369	
Sweden	0	0	0	0	
UK	1202	1144	332	183523	

<sup>a</sup> Data obtained and combined from [http://www.oie.int/eng/info/en\\_esb.htm](http://www.oie.int/eng/info/en_esb.htm) and <http://www.food.gov.uk/bse/facts/worldwidefig/incidence> with qualifiers as of 1/06/2004.

<sup>b</sup> Estimated data for 2003; see <http://www.fas.usda.gov/dlp/countrypages/index.html>

<sup>c</sup> Includes imported cases (France 1; Ireland 10; Italy 2; Portugal 1)

The disease does not appear to have made the same inroads in the rest of the world as it did within the EU (see Table 2), although other European countries appear to have BSE rates more similar to those of the EU than with non-European countries.<sup>2</sup> Several countries either have no BSE cases or cases that can be attributed to cattle imported from elsewhere.

<sup>1</sup> The variation in the decline across the member states may be an artifact due to varying approaches to testing before EU legislation imposed a consistent testing scheme.

<sup>2</sup> Several of the acceding countries have only begun testing within the last 3 years.

**Confirmed Cases of Mad Cow Disease outside the European Union<sup>d</sup>**

	2001	2002	2003	Total	Estimated Production <sup>e</sup> (x 1000MT)
Argentina	0	0	0	0	<b>2650</b>
Australia	0	0	0	0	<b>1946</b>
Brazil	0	0	0	0	<b>7530</b>
Canada	0	0	1	1	<b>1210</b>
Czech Republic	2	2	4	8	<b>n.a.<sup>f</sup></b>
Falkland Islands	0	0	0	1 <sup>h</sup>	<b>n.a.<sup>f</sup></b>
Israel	0	1	0	1	<b>53<sup>g</sup></b>
Japan	2	2	4	8	<b>505</b>
Liechtenstein	0	0	0	2	<b>n.a.<sup>f</sup></b>
New Zealand	0	0	0	0	<b>635</b>
Oman	0	0	0	2 <sup>h</sup>	<b>n.a.<sup>f</sup></b>
Poland	0	4	5	9	<b>275</b>
Slovakia	5	6	2	13	<b>n.a.<sup>f</sup></b>
Slovenia	1	1	1	3	<b>n.a.<sup>f</sup></b>
Switzerland	42	24	19	450	<b>190<sup>g</sup></b>
United States	0	0	1	1 <sup>h</sup>	<b>12000</b>

<sup>d</sup> Data obtained and combined from [http://www.oie.int/eng/info/en\\_esb.htm](http://www.oie.int/eng/info/en_esb.htm) and <http://www.food.gov.uk/bse/facts/worldwidefig/incidence> with qualifiers as of 1/06/2004

<sup>e</sup> Estimated for 2003; see <http://www.fas.usda.gov/dlp/countrypages/index.html>

<sup>f</sup> Information not available from "e", above.

<sup>g</sup> Data is from 2002 (See "e" above).

<sup>h</sup> Includes imported cases (Falkland Islands, Oman and the United States – 1 each)

**Conclusion:**

Although much recent attention has been devoted to the December 23, 2003 finding of a BSE-positive dairy cow in the United States, several factors must be noted:

1. The United States is the largest producer of cattle in the world, with an estimated production more than 50% larger than either the EU or Brazil.
2. The actual incidence of BSE in the United States is vanishingly small compared to that of many of its trading partners.
3. The dairy cow was born in Canada before the imposition of the Canada's ruminant-to-ruminant feed ban in 1997.
4. The dairy cow appears to have been exposed to feed containing the infectious prion while still in Canada, prior to being imported into the United States in 2001.

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## Related reports from USEU Brussels:

Report Number	Title	Date Released
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E23032	EU Food and Feed Controls	3/17/03